

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01  
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
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OMB-01 TRSE-00 AF-08 ARA-06 /132 W  
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R 101213Z FEB 77  
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1156  
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
USLO PEKING  
AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
AMEMBASSY DACCA  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN  
AMEMBASSY KABUL  
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO  
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 2027

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: IN, UR, PFOR  
SUBJECT: INDO-SOVIET BILATERAL TALKS

SUMMARY: INDO-SOVIET BILATERALS LAST WEEK APPEAR TO HAVE  
BEEN GENERAL REVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL SITUATION WITH RELATIVELY  
LITTLE MOMENTOUS RESULTS, AT LEAST FROM COMMENTS OF ONE MEA  
OFFICIAL ON THE DELEGATION. SOVIETS AND INDIANS DISAGREED ON  
LOS ISSUES, HIJACKING TREATY, HUMAN RIGHTS. SOVIETS WERE  
NEGATIVE ON CHINA, POSITIVE ON BANGLADESH, VAGUE ON PAKISTAN.  
END SUMMARY.

1. MEA JOINT SECRETARY (POLICY PLANNING) DAMODARAN REVIEWED  
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INDO-SOVIET BILATERAL TALKS HELD IN MOSCOW FEBRUARY 1-4 WITH  
POL COUNSELOR. (INDIAN SIDE WAS HEADED BY FONSEC MEHTA AND  
SOVIET SIDE BY DEPUTY FONMIN FIRYUBIN.)

2. CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF TIME WAS CONSUMED WITH EXCHANGE  
OF VIEWS ON SUBCONTINENTAL SITUATION, PARTICULARLY PAKISTAN  
AND BANGLADESH. SOVIETS WERE VERY CAREFUL NOT TO SAY ANYTHING

CRITICAL OF PAKISTAN (THEIR USUAL POSTURE IN BILATERAL TALKS) AND WERE GENERALLY POSITIVE ABOUT BANGLADESH. SOVIETS THOUGHT ZIA'S POSITION WAS INCREASINLY FIRM AND HOPED INDO-BDG RELATIONS WOULD IMPROVE. INDIANS AGREED. SOVIETS TOOK NO POSITION ON FARAKKA OTHER THAN TO ENDORSE BILATERAL EFFORTS TOWARD SOLUTION. SOVIETS DID NOT COMMENT ON BANGLADESH-CHINESE RELATIONS, BUT DAMODARAN SAID IT WAS CLEAR TO GOI SIDE THAT DESIRE TO FORESTALL SITUATION WHERE CHINESE BECAME ENTRENCHED IN BANGLADESH WAS BEHIND GENERAL SOVIET EXPRESSION OF DESIRE FOR IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH BDG.

3. SOVIETS INQUIRED ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR OPENING LAND ROUTE FROM USSR INTO INDIA ACROSS PAKISTAN IN WAKE OF GRADUAL IMPROVEMENT IN INDO-PAK RELATIONS. INDIANS REPLIED THEY WERE WILLING IF PAKS WERE. DAMODARAN SAID SOVIETS SEEMED SOMEWHAT CONCERNED ABOUT THRUST OF IRANIAN ARMS SOUTH THROUGH PERSIAN GULF INTO INDIAN OCEAN (INDIANS WERE DUBIOUS ABOUT SOVIET CONCERNS), BUT THAT THEY HAD NOT SEEMED WORRIED OVER IRANIAN POLICY ELSEWHERE.

4. SOVIETS HAD PRESSED INDIANS TO SUPPORT SOVIET POSITION ON "HUMAN RIGHTS", WITH SOUTHERN AFRICA, CHILE, AND PALESTINE BEING ONLY AREAS SOVIETS FOCUSED ON. SOVIET FORMULATION FOCUSED ON INJURY TO HUMAN RIGHTS FROM COLONIALISM AND IMPERIALISM, AND FROM EXTERNAL INTERFERENCE, AND SPECIFICALLY EXCLUDED PURELY INTERNAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMPLAINTS. INDIANS, DAMODARAN SAID, DEFLECTED SOVIET APPROACH ON THIS AS WELL AS ON ANTI-HIJACKING AGREEMENT. SOVIETS HAD SUGGESTED NEGOTIATION OF INDO-SOVIET BILATERAL AGREEMENT AGAINST HIJACKING. CONFIDENTIAL

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DAMODARAN SAID THIS WAS ISSUE THEY PREFERRED TO DEAL WITH CASE-BY-CASE.

5. SOVIETS ARGUED STONGLY AGAINST INDIAN ARCHIPELAGO POSITION AT LOS CONFERENCE (AND DAMODARAN SAID HE PERSONNALLY DID NOT UNDERSTAND REASON FOR INDIAN POSITION AND THOUGHT GOI WOULD PROBABLY END BY RETREATING ON THIS SUBJECT AT UPCOMING LOS CONFERENCE). SOVIETS HAD PRESSED STRONGLY ON NON-PROLIFERATION ISSUES, AND OTHER SIDES HAD AGREED TO DISAGREE. ASIAN SECURITY TREATY WAS AGAIN TROTTED OUT BY FIRYUBIN AND AGAIN DEFLECTED BY INDIANS.

6. SOVIETS HAD GONE ON AT GREAT LENGTH ON CHINA, ARGUING THEY SAW NO PROSPECT FOR CHANGE IN CHINESE POLICIES UNDER NEW LEADERSHIP IN PEKING AND CAUTIONING INDIANS ABOUT CHINESE UNTRUSTWORTHINESS. INDIANS RESPONDED THEY HAD HAD SUFFICIENT EXPERIENCE WITH CHINESE TO MAKE THEIR OWN JUDGEMENTS ON CHINESE-INDIAN ISSUES. DAMODARAN SAID SOVIETS APPEARED CONCERNED OVER FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS.

GOI INDICATED IT INTENDED TO MOVE DELIBERATELY AND WITH FULL AWARENESS OF POTENTIAL PROBLEMS.

7. SOVIETS HAD BARELY TOUCHED ON SOVIET-US RELATIONS, BUT KOSYGIN TOOK GENERALLY UPBEAT LINE IN REFERRING TO NEW US ADMINISTRATION IN BRIEF COMMENT WHEN INDIAN DELEGATION MET WITH HIM. (DAMODARAN SAID EVEN KOSYGEN COMMENTED ON USUALLY COLD US WINTER.) INDIAN OCEAN ISSUES DID NOT COME UP NOR DID PREPARATIONS FOR SPECIAL DISARMAMENT SESSION OF UNGA. ECONOMIC ISSUES WERE ALSO NOT DISCUSSED, DAMODARAN SAID, DURING THE BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS NOR WERE DOMESTIC POLITICAL MATTERS INCLUDING THE INDIAN COMMUNIST PARTY.

8. IN RESPONSE TO A COMMENT THAT THERE HARDLY SEEMED ENOUGH BUSINESS TO HAVE KEPT THE TWO SIDES BUSY FOR FOUR DAYS, DAMODARAN HEARTILY AGREED. HE SAID FIRYUBIN IN PARTICULAR WAS VERY STIFF AND FORMAL IN THESE TALKS AND ANY LIVELINESS  
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IN THE EXCHANGES CAME FROM FONSEC MEHTA'S EFFORT TO CONCEPTUALIZE PROBLEMS. SOVIETS DID NOT RESPOND IN KIND. THERE HAD BEEN SOME DISCUSSION OF THE NUTS AND BOLTS INVOLVED IN PRESIDENT PODGYORNY'S FORTHCOMING FEB. 21-26 TRIP TO INDIA AND THE FOREIGN MINISTRY LEVEL BILATERALS COULD BE VIEWED AS PREPARATION FOR THE SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS BETWEEN PM GANDHI AND PODGYORNY. DAMODARAN SAID BILATERAL MEETINGS OF THE SORT JUST HELD WERE CURRENTLY SCHEDULED TWICE A YEAR BUT HE HOPED THEY COULD BE REDUCED TO NO MORE THAN ONCE A YEAR. (FEB. 9 SAMACHAR RELEASE SAYS PADGORNYY WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER VENIAMIN DYMSHYTS, MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIAL CONSTRUCTION NIKOLAI GOLDIN, AND DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER FIRYUBIN.)  
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